United Nations A/59/753

General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 March 2005

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 108
Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Redeployment of posts

Note by the Secretary-General*

1. By paragraph 14 of its resolution 58/270 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, during the course of the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, to commence, on an experimental basis, with the redeployment of posts as necessary to meet the evolving needs of the Organization in attaining its mandated programmes and activities, in accordance with the following principles:

(a) The experiment shall be limited to the redeployment of up to 50 posts Organization-wide;

(b) The experiment shall not imply any change in the human resources management policies of the Organization;

(c) The proposed programme budget shall remain the principal instrument in which the Secretary-General sets out the resources and staffing requirements of the Organization;

(d) The authority to redeploy posts shall in no way prevent the Secretary-General from requesting additional posts during the course of the experiment;

(e) The experiment shall not exacerbate high vacancy rates in any budget sections;

(f) The experiment shall not apply to language services;

(g) Redeployment between sections shall be carried out only after all possibilities of using resources available within budget sections that will benefit from the transfer have been exhaustively explored;

(h) The experiment shall not be implemented as a result of General Assembly resolutions calling for the implementation of decisions "within existing resources";

* The timing of the issuance of this note reflects the need to carry out consultations.

05-28072 (E) 240305

(i) Reporting to the General Assembly shall be carried out in the context of the annual budget performance reports;

(j) The Secretary-General is requested to provide information periodically to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on actions taken.

2. By paragraph 15 of the same resolution, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the experiment shall in no way limit opportunities for external recruitment for posts at any level. In paragraph 16 of the resolution the Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its resumed fifty-ninth session on the implications of the experiment for human resources management policies, and in paragraph 17 it requested the Secretary-General to submit, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a comprehensive report for consideration by the Assembly at its sixtieth session on the progress of and lessons learned from the experiment, covering a number of aspects, including, inter alia, additional implications, if any, for human resources management policies.

3. Pursuant to subparagraph 14 (i) of resolution 58/270, this issue was reported on in the context of the first performance report for 2004-2005. The difficulties encountered in 2004 in utilizing the flexibility to redeploy posts were set out in the report. In particular, the experience showed that very few instances exist where staff resources are not only surplus to a particular subprogramme, but also surplus to all subprogrammes within a particular programme and are therefore available for redeployment to another programme. While highlighting these difficulties, the report also set out the intention to adjust the strategies employed in 2005 with the aim of utilizing the flexibility afforded to the Secretary-General in implementing mandated programmes. Consequently, wherever possible, posts have been redeployed during the course of the biennium to meet the evolving needs of the Organization.

4. Five posts have been identified for redeployment on a permanent basis to address requirements arising during the biennium. One P-5 post is to be redeployed from the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management to strengthen the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. In exchange, one P-4 post is to be redeployed from the Office of the High Representative to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management. Three posts have already been redeployed from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to Administration, Vienna, for the 2004-2005 biennium. Following the integration of information technology and human resource functions into the Division of Management at the United Nations Office at Vienna, these three posts (1 P-3 and 1 P-2 in the Information Technology Service and 1 General Service (principal level) in the Human Resource Management Service) have already been redeployed so as to be properly reflected under Administration, Vienna, in line with the functions carried out during the 2004-2005 biennium.

5. In addition to the above, another 12 posts have been redeployed between sections under temporary administrative arrangements to meet immediate needs, either of a short-term nature or pending longer-term arrangements to be proposed in the context of budget proposals for 2006-2007. These temporary redeployments have been made possible by the availability of vacant posts for periods during the

course of the biennium pending completion of the full recruitment and placement process. Consistent with the terms of resolution 58/270, all redeployments, whether temporary or permanent, have been carried out only after all possibilities of using resources available within budget sections that will benefit from the transfer have been exhaustively explored.

6. The foregoing summarizes the redeployments carried out to date during the biennium. These redeployments will be also reported in the context of the reporting arrangements specified in resolution 58/270, namely, the second performance report and the comprehensive report on the experiment to be considered at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. At the same time, it should be noted that with the increased focus on prioritization, realignment and reallocation of resources within programmes, budget proposals continue to reflect significant numbers of post redeployments within sections. It will be recalled that the proposed programme budget for 2004-2005 reflected the redeployment of 810 posts either within or between sections. In the forthcoming biennium it is intended to propose a further 242 redeployments in the programme budget for 2006-2007.

7. As regards the implications of the experiment for human resources management policies, no implications for human resources management policies have been noted thus far. However, taking into account the limited nature of the experience to date, the Secretariat intends to address the progress of and lessons learned from the experiment, on the basis of the experience of 2004 and 2005, in the context of the comprehensive report to be considered by the General Assembly at the sixtieth session.

8. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present note.**